Re:*Port*

Issue 2 **The Independent Newsletter for Portfolio Users** Nov. 1, 1991

Keep your writing right with our exclusive SplChk

Typing on the Portfolio can be tough. Using the small keyboard can send spelling errors through the roof. But now, with the Re:*Port* exclusive program SplChk, your Portfolio documents will be correctly spelled every time.

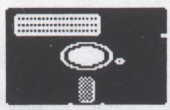
SplChk is an editor .HOO file, much like the MACRO.HOO program from the last issue. You can run it from the Portfolio's built-in editor by pressing Fn-6 within the editor. If SplChk is on the A: drive, the program will be offered in a menu.

First, let's cover what the program is and what it isn't.

SplChk has a dictionary of more than 16,000 words. It also is able to check many variations on those words, such as words that end in -ing, -es, -s, -ed, -er, etc. SplChk also stores user-defined words. It is capable of storing around 2,000 of your personal words. When SplChk finds an incorrect word, you may choose to change it, add it to your personal dictionary, ignore it and continue, or exit the program. You also may stop the program at any time by pressing ESC.

SplChk does not offer alternative spellings to incorrect words. Nor will this version of SplChk run from the DOS prompt; it works only within the built-in editor.

Also, SplChk does not bother checking any word with fewer than three letters; nor does it check any word longer than 17 letters, as it has none in its dictionary.



ON DISK

SplChk is on your Re:*Port* Disk #2 under the \SPLCHK directory.

SplChk is also a quite complex program with big memory requirements. If your C: RAM drive is larger than 16K, the Port will say, "Program failed to run" when you try to invoke SplChk. (To set your C: drive to 16K, type FDISK 16. Of course, you'll want to back up your files first. See the backup/restore program in this issue for a quick and easy way to do that).

SplChk is also a disk space hog. In order to fit the dictionary, which is stored in a compressed format, the program, and the indexes that speed up access to the dictionary, the entire thing needs to be put on a 128K RAM card. This will give you just enough left over space for a user dictionary of about 2,000 words. Alternatively, you may run the program from a

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• **Find out who won our 128K Giveaway, and enter to win a 2400-baud pocket modem and $50 worth of free time on CompuServe.**
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From the Editor

Here it is — issue #2 of Re:Port. One of the most difficult things about this issue was decided what to put in and what to save for future issues.

Let me know if there's something different you'd rather see. Would you like more programming tips, more industry news, more special offers, more fun and games, or less of any of those? To help inspire you, that question is part of this issue's contest.

Congratulations to reader Fred Greenspan! He won the 128K card with his entry on how to hide Port files from snoopers. Check out Page 11 for his advice.

Coming up

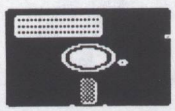
In the next issue of Re:*Port*, we'll have more exclusive programs: Checkbook, a financial program with export features to Quicken; and Piano, which turns your Port into a sound machine. Plus, more tips, tricks, special deals, and advice.

We'd love to hear from you. Write to:

Re:*Port* newsletter
c/o David Stewart, editor
1618 South Beech Court
Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Stupid Port Tricks

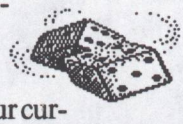
It's not just a work sheet



DICE.WKS is on your Re:*Port* Disk #2 under the \TRICKS directory.

In this issue we introduce a new column to Re:*Port*, Stupid Port Tricks. This column is dedicated to the pursuit of fun and games on the Portfolio ... of course, some useful information might sneak in from time to time.

Check out DICE.WKS on your Re:*Port* disk. Load it into the Worksheet application.



Once the file is loaded, just move your cursor to cell D2 and hit enter twice to throw the dice. With every throw, the Port generates random numbers between 1 and 6 twice, simulating the toss of dice.

The C2 cell simply adds the dice. Voila, instant craps game!

(Of course, Re:*Port* doesn't encourage gambling ... although this spreadsheet could help pass the time on a long flight to Las Vegas.)

In order to generate the roll of each die, the DICE.WKS sheet uses the formula (@INT(@RAND *6))+1. The @RAND function generates a number between 0 and 1.

When this is multiplied by any number X, you now have a number between 0 and X-1.

In this case, we'd have numbers 0 through 5, so we have to add 1 in order to get a correct die roll of 1 through 6.

This worksheet can be quite handy if you have lots of games sitting around the house but you lost the dice long ago. For example, scroll the worksheet until the A5 cell is in the upper left-hand corner.

If you hit enter twice on the word Yatzhee, you'll get a roll of five dice (actually, these dice have been rolling when you were playing craps before. Every time you make a change to the worksheet, or simply hit enter twice on a non-empty cell, the worksheet recalculates and figures out new random numbers. If the worksheet isn't recalculating, hit the Atari key, W, and R to turn automatic recalculation on).

Have fun!

Send your Stupid Port Tricks to us, and we'll pass them along. Try to keep them simple, either using the Port's built-in programs or PBASIC.

Quick Tip

Your RAM cards are expensive and valuable. Don't let them get lost, and don't let them lose your data because of battery problems.

Create a label for each of your RAM cards. Include the following:

Your name

Your address

An offer to pay postage if returned

When to change the battery

Atari recommends changing batteries after two years for a 32K card, and after one year for the 64K and 128K cards.

Industry News

Hyperlist and hypertext available soon

Perhaps the biggest news in the Portfolio world right now is the soon-to-be-released Hyperlist from Atari. Don Thomas, the Portfolio's marketing manager, says that the program should be ready in "a couple of weeks" but that they're ready to start taking orders now.

Hyperlist goes from $49.95 retail, one of the lowest prices for Portfolio software from Atari. Re:*Port* subscribers, however, can take advantage of our special price of $40.96 for the package.

Hyperlist is an outliner and organizer — something that the Portfolio seems well-suited for yet has not had until now.

Speaking of hyper, there's a hypertext authoring and viewing system soon to be available for the Portfolio. The beautiful thing about this one is that it doesn't just run on the Port, but also on the HP95LX, the Poqet, the Psion 3, and even your desktop PC. Talk about data exchange!

The program is called HTX from Peterson Technical Resources. We here at Re:*Port* have been playing around with various Alpha Release versions of the software, and it is full of features (some even powerful beyond the author's intentions).

You simply use the Port's built-in editor to create a hypertext file ... if something in your file is a link to another file, you add that word and the file it is linked to at the top of your original file. You also can link to a program or an internal application.

Re:*Port* tested this by setting up a hypertext file with a link to Don Messerli's public domain program PGSHOW, which displays graphics on the Portfolio. At the press of a key, we could now toggle between a story about the United States and a U.S. map.

The possibilities are astounding — a few simple drawings of the parts in a plant, and you've got a graphic database. The program also would be useful for creating a help system, a DOS shell, or a hypertext book.

The program is constantly being updated right now (it hasn't even reached Beta Release stage yet), but Kent Peterson of Peterson Technical Resources is offering a special price to people who order the software through Re:*Port* (he's a subscriber himself!). Get HTX for $55.25; the retail price will be $65. The program comes on an IBM-format disk.

We'll keep you updated when the full working version is ready. As of this writing, Kent was adding more Port-specific functions to the program to make it look and feel more like one of the internal applications.

Another third-party programmer has a program that he is preparing to release. Michael Delugg is writing a system that may be of interest to anyone in the film or music industries. Here's his description of H!tMaker:

"H!tMaker for the Portfolio is actually a collection of four utilities: 'HitMaker,' 'Hit'N'Run,' 'TimeCode Calculator' and 'Delay Calculator.'

"Individually and together, these programs greatly simplify most of the tedious (mathematical) chores related to music and audio/video production. H!tMaker makes it easier to deal with the arcane numbers associated with integrating audio and video.

"This suite of mini-applications can help anyone involved in video or music production, from the writer to the producer, from directors to editors to engineers.

"If you are involved, or would like to get involved in the field of audio/video production, then certainly H!tMaker will become a valuable ally in your arsenal of intelligent tools."

If you are interested in this software, contact Michael Delugg, Four to the Bar, Inc., 15 West 72 Street #20-S, New York, NY 10023.

Do you need plastic cases for your RAM or ROM cards? Maybe your original ones are chipped or broken. If so, Artisan Software offers a deal on those plastic cases. If you want a backup case, a case for your File Manager Card, or a replacement case, send $1 and a self-addressed padded envelope to Artisan Software, P.O. Box 849, Manteca, CA 95336. Four cases will be sent by return mail.

And finally, for those of you who plan to be in the Chicago area during November, stop by the Chicago Computerfest, sponsored by Atari and the Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts, November 23 and 24th 1991. Show hours will be 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Tickets are $6 at the door at the Ramada Hotel O'Hare. Contact Chicago Computerfest by Atari, C/O LCACE, P.O. Box 8788, Waukegan, IL 60079-8788.

Spell Check

Continued from Page 1

connected hard drive if you have one.

To run the program from a hard drive, you still need to have SPLCHK.HOO on the A: drive (that's an oddity of the Port's built-in editor; .HOO files must be on the A: drive). You also must add a file called DATA.SPL to your A: drive. Within this file, you need to type in the full pathname of where your spelling files are stored (i.e. 'C:\SPELL\'). Note that you must include the drive letter and the trailing backslash.

Other users will have to put the entire thing on an A: card. If you store your text files on an A: card already, you'll need to load your file into the editor, shut the Port off by hitting Fn-O and hitting the Fn key again, then insert the card that has SplChk on it. Turn the Port back on by hitting any key.

Now, you're ready to SplChk. Start at the beginning of the file (here's a tip: Hit ctrl-a to move to the beginning of a text file; hit ctrl-z to move to the end). Hit Fn-6, then hit enter when a menu with SPLCHK.HOO appears. SplChk will take over from there.

When running SplChk, if you choose to change an incorrectly spelled word, the program will delete the old word and replace it with your new spelling, right into the document. It does not check to see if the new word is spelled correctly.

If you have a large text file full of words that you know you'll want to put into your user dictionary, try this. Type in the list of words, and run it through SplChk. Keep hitting A for Add until the program has checked all of your words. You now have a personalized dictionary. This technique is useful for adding the names of family members or creating a legal or medical spelling dictionary.

When SplChk finishes checking your file, or if you stop it during execution, it reports on how many words were checked and how many words it was unable to locate in its dictionary.

We hope you enjoy using SplChk; actually, we hope that SplChk is able to save you from the embarrassment of poor spelling. And remember, if you need an extra 128K RAM card to store the program, Re:*Port* subscribers can get them for the special low price of $134.96 each.

PBASIC

Version 4.9 increases graphic control

By BJ Gleason

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When we last left, we were talking about PBASIC version 4.7. Well, in the intervening time, two additional releases were made. The current version is now 4.9, so I will start off today's column discussing the new features, and that will lead us nicely into the rest of the column, Graphics Programming.

NEW FEATURES FOR VERSION 4.9

New Functions:

CHARPTR - Return the address of Character Table
CWD$ - Return the Current Working Directory
EXISTS - Returns TRUE if a file exists
FILESIZE - Returns the size of the current file
FINDFILE$ - Search for a filename

Gleason on PBASIC

FINDNEXT$ - Returns name of next matching File

New Statements:

CMODE - Set the character printing mode
GLOCATE - Locate for graphics printing
GPRINT - Print a bit pattern

PRINT will now work on a graphics screen, so you mix text and graphics.

The new command line switch, -P, allows users to swap memory cards before running a program.

You can now use an array for MENU elements.

Let's take a closer look at these new features:

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Online Services

Portfolio support is a modem call away

In the book *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, author Douglas Adams envisions a hand-held computerized book that is constantly updated via sub-etha links to huge databases. With a Portfolio in hand, you've got a more down-to-earth version of the same thing.

With a Portfolio, a serial port, a pocket modem, a communications program, and a subscription to an online service, you can put an incredible amount of information in your pocket. You can even send and receive email, send faxes, check the weather, and access online encyclopedias.

But one of the most exciting things available online right now for Portfolio owners is the incredible amount of support for the machine. Two major online services, Atari, and a private sysop all have areas to support the Portfolio.

Perhaps the most popular of these is CompuServe. The service is the official Portfolio support site for Atari, through the Port's special forum GO APORTFOLIO. The Portfolio is the only palmtop computer with its very own CompuServe forum. The online team consists of about five attentive sysops. Also, you can get quick answers from Atari's Don Thomas, the marketing manager for the Portfolio. Atari Developer Support stops by online as well.

The message traffic on the forum is moderate, but always up-to-date. Many messages are responses to pleas for help; if you're looking for a place to ask questions and get quick answers, you'll do well there. Expect a reply within a few hours, most times.

However, there are more messages on CompuServe concerning new products and Atari announcements than on the other services.

CompuServe's APORTFOLIO forum also is the best place to look for files both new and old. (See the sidebar and diskette file).

Re:*Port* provides free support to all subscribers in the APORTFOLIO forum and CompuServe email ... drop us a line at 73770,2021.

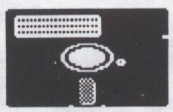
GEnie, the other major online service, also has a Portfolio area (Page 950). It is far less active than the CompuServe forum, although the team of sysops there is working to change that with updated news files and quicker approval of uploaded files. Also, a weekly two-hour online conversation about the Portfolio, hosted by Re:*Port* editor David Stewart is in the works. Stay tuned to GEnie for more information about that. Re:*Port* also supports subscribers via the message base and email on GEnie. Contact D.STEWART28.

Message traffic through the GEnie Portfolio forum is generally light. It does seem that many people simply read messages rather than post them. Expect a reply within two days or so, although a reply is not as guaranteed as one would be on CompuServe's forum.

One jump GEnie got on CompuServe recently was its quick posting of news from the Comdex computer show, although it was not very detailed.

The Atari BBS, (408) 745-2191, generally features quick responses from Atari itself on any questions you may have. And the only cost is the long-distance phone call if you're not in the area. However, the download selection is not as broad as CompuServe's and GEnie's.

Finally, the Any Port in a Storm BBS, (919) 598-5320, is the newest entry to the Port's online support. It has several file and message areas devoted to the Portfolio. It's new and thus doesn't have much right now, but its sysop is an experienced Port user, and it doesn't cost anything except the price of the phone call.



ON DISK

Catalogues of the files available on CompuServe and GEnie are available on your Re:*Port* Disk #2 in the \ONLINE directory.

CompuServe wants all Re:*Port* readers who aren't members to sign up now, so they've put forward a special offer to our subscribers.

You can get a sign-up kit and $15 worth of free connect time by calling (800) 848-8199 (ask for Operator 198). Tell them that you heard about this from Re:*Port*, an APORTFOLIO forum member.

The $15 free time offer is open only to people who do not yet have a membership. But fill out a contest entry, and you might win $50 worth of free time!

Featured Utility

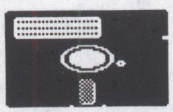
Backup, restore your C: drive quickly

In the last issue of Re:*Port*, the DOS Tips column pointed out how to backup and restore your C: drive to a RAM card. This is very good practice; you should do it at least once a week.

But now there's a faster and easier way to backup your C: drive. And it makes an exact backup of your drive, not just a collection of filenames.

BR.EXE works on the fact that your C: drive is simply an area of memory in the Portfolio. Using block read and write commands, it is possible to dump the entire contents of the C: drive to any other drive in less than one second!

To use BR.EXE, simply enter the command **BR B <filename>** to backup, and **BR R <filename>** to restore.



ON DISK

BR is on your Re:*Port* Disk #2 under the \BACKUP directory.

Here's some tips to get the most out of BR.EXE. I would back up my C: drive every week, storing the image file in a filename with the date that it was backed up (i.e. BR B A:110191.BAK, for Nov. 1, 1991). Then, transfer the files to your desktop computer, and use a program such as ARC or ZIP to squeeze the file. Copy the final file to a floppy disk and lock it away for safekeeping. You should be able to store up to two years' worth of backups on one 720K floppy using this method!

Note that when you do a restore with **BR R <filename>**, it copies the contents of the file onto the C: drive exactly as it was before you lost your C: drive. All files will be restored exactly. To restore just one file, you'll need to change your directory to the directory you want the file to be stored in (i.e. **CD \SYSTEM**), then type **BR R <backup file><filename>**, where <filename> is the file you want restored.

Also, the restore can be unpredictable if your C: drive is not the same size as the one that was backed up. Be sure to stay consistent with your C: drive size.

Book Review

Abacus promises to make you a Port expert

If you look very closely at your bookstore or library, you might find a pleasant surprise. There's a Portfolio book on the market, *The Complete Guide to the Atari Portfolio*.

It's 194 pages from the publisher Abacus. The subtitle, "Makes You a Portfolio Expert Fast," tells you what you'll find within: Tips basically geared toward the beginner.

For the most part, the book is just a slightly more well-organized and in-depth version of instructions that came with the Portfolio. If you're looking for programming information or the location of the Port's specific interrupts, you won't find them in *The Complete Guide*.

However, if you're shaky with DOS, this book goes to some trouble to explain all the commands that the Port has available, taking special trouble to separate common DOS from the Port's special commands.

But perhaps the most useful section of the book deals with the Worksheet program. The book jumps into this subject and doesn't stop with the minor points. If you're looking for a detailed description of the functions available in the Worksheet but don't want to buy a Lotus 1-2-3 guide, this book may be worthwhile for this section alone.

Otherwise, the information included in the book is not much beyond what you'll find in the documentation your Portfolio came with. It's clear, easy-to-skim style will help you find some information you may have read before but had forgotten (for example, I didn't remember Fn-P was the Print Screen key on the Portfolio, but I noticed this as I flipped through the book).

PBASIC Continued from Page 4

FILE DIRECTORY FUNCTIONS

In keeping with the theme of Graphics, this program will allow you to select a .PGC file a menu and display it. This will show you have to use FINDFILE$, FINDNEXT$, and the new option in MENU.

```
' Pick a .PGC File to display
' Set string size small since we may have a lot
ssize=15
dim fn$(200)      ' up to 200 file names
n=0
mask$="*.PGC"
fn$(n)=cwd$+mask$ ' make 1st entry TITLE for menu
incr(n)
' get the file filename that matches "*.PGC"
fn$(n)=findfile$(mask$)
' get the rest of the filenames
while fn$(n)<>""
        incr(n)
        fn$(n)=findnext$ ' get the next file name
                         ' returns "" when no more
wend
s=n
if s>6 then
        s=6  ' six elements at a time
        ' add a up/down arrow if more than 6 elements
        fn$(0)=fn$(0)+" "+chr$(18)
endif
' display the menu - since the count is negative, that
' means use the array fn$(0)...fn$(n) for title and elements
m=0:t=0
10 m=menu(1,1,s,t,m,-n,fn$(0))
if m=-1 then cls:end        ' <esc> key was pressed
m=m%256         ' find the element number
t=m\256 pgshow fn$(m+1),0
goto 10
```

GRAPHICS

PBASIC offers a large number of functions for support of Graphics. PBASIC supports Don Messerli's PGC, Portfolio Graphics Standard for screen displays. This format allows for fast and easy screen displays using the PGSHOW statement. You can also display, edit and save PGC file using PGLOAD and PGSAVE. With PGLOAD, the display is fast enough to allow for approximately 6 frames per second animation.

The latest functions allow for combining text and graphics on the same screen. As you might be aware, due to the design of the video screen on the Portfolio, text will not be displayed properly when the screen is in graphics mode. PBASIC 4.9 overcomes that limitation, by allowing you to combine Text and Graphics, but then takes the next logical steps. PBASIC allows you to display character with attributes: Reverse video, Underline, Wide, Narrow, Sideways, Upside Down, Double Height, and Half Height. In fact, you can combine these different modes!

The CMODE statement will set the mode that the text will print out in:

Bit	Characteristic	
0	Underline	(+1)
1	Reverse	(+2)
2	Double Width	(+4)
3	Upside Down	(+8)
4	Sideways	(+16)
5	Double Height	(+32)
6	Half Height	(+64)
7	Half Width	(+128)
8	OR bits	(+256)
9	XOR bits	(+512)

For example: to print in Reverse Wide = 2+4 = 6. To print sideways, use 16, to print sideways in the other direction, use sideways and upside down, 24.

Bits 8 and 9 determine how the characters are printed. If both are off, the entire bit map is printed. If bit 8 is set, the bits are OR'd on the screen. This means that the background is left unchanged. If bit 9 is set, the characters are XOR'd on to the screen. This is useful for making sure that the characters are not lost on a dark background. There is a little program to show the difference:

```
screen 6
line(10,0)-(50,50),1,BF
a$="this is a test"
cmode=0:print a$;"  Normal Text"
cmode=256: print a$;" OR'd Text"
cmode=512: print a$;" XOR'd Text"
wait
```

Note: On some Portfolios, there is a bug with the READ_PIXEL in the ROM. If CMODE=512 doesn't work, (runs just like CMODE=0) try running FIX0D.COM. CMODE should then work properly.

In order to display text and graphics, I had to create a character set or the Portfolio, which is modeled on the

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PBASIC Continued from Page 7

Portfolio's character set. The big advantage to this is that you can actually REPLACE the character set. CHARPTR points to the base of the character set. Each character is represented by a 8x6 pixel font. Each character then requires a 6 byte bit map. For example, the bit map for the character "A" is 7E,11,11,11,7E,00. If you want to change how the character "A" looks on the graphics screen, you can replace the bitmap. The address of the bit map for any character is:

```
base = charptr+(asc(c$)*6)
```

You can then POKE the new values into memory:

```
base = charptr+(asc("A")*6)
for x=0 to 5
read bm
poke base+x,bm
next x
screen 6
print "Press Any Key..."
wait
1 data &h7f, &h11, &h11, &h7f, &h70, &h00
```

When you run this program, the "A" in "Any" should look like that fancy computer text you always see in the movies.

You can replace the entire character set using this technique. If you want to use a different character set, I suggest the following technique:

```
' Replace Character set
base = charptr
for x=0 to 255*6
read bm
poke base+x,bm
next x
1 data...
2 data...
' now RUN the other program to free up memory!
run "myprog.bas"
```

About the Author

Mr. BJ Gleason is an Instructor at The American University in the Computer Science and Information Systems Department. He has been programming for over a decade now, and is the author of PBASIC 4.9.

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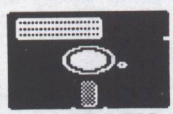
This will allow you to replace the character set, and then run the other program, freeing up the memory the DATA statements required. If you do not want to replace the entire character set, change the FOR loop to reflect only the ASCII values of the characters you want to change.

Instead of replacing the character set, you can create new characters using the GPRINT statement. This can be used to display bitmaps as well. To display the computer font "A" using GPRINT:

```
GPRINT "7f11117f70"
```

This is the technique used to create the little running man in RUNMAN.BAS.



PBASIC 4.9 is on your Re:Port Disk #2 under the \PBASIC directory.

PBASIC or PowerBASIC: Which is right for you?

By BJ Gleason

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In this column, I want to make it perfectly clear the differences between PBASIC, the freeware interpreter, and PowerBASIC.

While I am the author of PBASIC, I want it to be known that this will be an unbiased review and comparison. I will be comparing PBASIC, version 4.9, with PowerBASIC for the Portfolio.

It came in a big box, and when I opened it up, there was a small box - PowerBASIC. I opened it and found, in my opinion, the smallest compiler in the world. The manual is 204 pages and is smaller in size than the

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Which BASIC? Continued from Page 8

original Portfolio manual, but it is very easy to read and very well written.

The compiler itself is very complete and includes random access files, and interrupt driven serial I/O, as well as integers and double precision floating point numbers. It can compile to .COM or .RUN files. RUN files will allow to access maximum memory. However, the compiler will not generate stand alone programs. To run the compiled code, you have to have the runtime module PBRUN.RUN. This is a 23k file that you can distribute this with your programs. The compiled code is VERY fast....

The compiler comes on a ROM card, with a number of support files, as well as sample programs. However, you can not compile the sample programs until you copy them to a RAM card, or C: drive. The compiler will generate the code to the same location that the source comes from. Since C: drive is small and unreliable, you will really need to copy the files to a RAM card for development purposes.

The compiler will not run on the PC. You can use a standard text editor on a PC. If you want to develop programs on the PC, you can buy PowerBASIC for the PC, or a special PowerBASIC development kit for the Portfolio that runs on the PC. I do not yet know the price for the special development kit.

PowerBASIC will use the last file that you edited, but will not point to the error in the editor. It does not allow you to take advantage of special Portfolio features, such as menus, windows, and other Portfolio-only features (editor's note: PowerBASIC does allow these features, but thus far only by using calls to Portfolio interrupts, which are confidential and available through Atari's Technical Reference Guide).

Lets take a look at the Pros and Cons for each:

PowerBASIC Pros:

- More memory available
- Programs run faster
- Random Access files
- Supplied on ROM Card
- Interrupt Driven Serial Input/Output

PowerBASIC Cons:

- Only runs on the Portfolio
- Debugging is harder
- Does not interact with the editor
- Does not make use of the internal Portfolio features
- Doesn't allow for Hex constants
- Cost $75+
- PowerBASIC for the PC another $75+

PBASIC Pros:

- Runs on the PC and the Portfolio (and HP)
- Editor points to errors
- Allows Access to internal features (Menus, etc.)
- Importing from a .WKS file
- PGC graphics support with Animation
- Cost: Free
- Updated regularly

PBASIC Cons:

- Requires about 70k of memory to run
- Slow
- Not 100% compatible with GWBASIC
- Transfer to Portfolio can be a minor problem

Here is a list of features that PBASIC and PowerBASIC have in common:

ABS	FOR, NEXT	MID$
ASC	FRE	MKDIR
ATN	GOSUB	NAME
BEEP	GOTO	OCT$
BIN$	HEX$	ON ERROR
CALL	IF, IF (block)	ON GOSUB
CALL INTERRUPT	INKEY$	ON GOTO
CHDIR	INP	OPEN
CHR$	INPUT	OUT
CLEAR	INPUT #	PEEK
CLOSE	INPUT$	POINT
CLS	INSTAT	POKE
COMMAND$	INSTR	POS
COS	INT	PRINT
CSRLIN	KILL	PRINT USING
DATA	LCASE$	PRINT #
DATE$	LEFT$	PRINT # USING
DEF FN	LEN	PSET
DEF SEG	LET	RANDOMIZE
DIM	LINE	READ
DO WHILE,	LINE INPUT	REG
WEND	LINE INPUT #	REM
END	LOCATE	RESTORE
EOF	LOG	RESUME
ERL, ERR	LPOS	RETURN
ERROR	LPRINT	RIGHT$
EXP	LPRINT USING	RMDIR

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Which BASIC? Continued from Page 9

RND
SCREEN
SGN
SIN
SQR
STR$
STRING$
TAB
TAN
TIME$
TROFF, TRON
UCASE$
VAL
VARPTR
VARSEG
WHILE, WEND
WRITE#

Here are the additional functions and statements included with PowerBasic. Most of these command are to support the Random Access file.

$COM
$STACK
CIRCLE
CVD, CVI, CVS
DEF FN, END
DEF
DEFINT
DEFSNG
DEFDBL
DEFSTR
DO, LOOP
EXECUTE
EXIT
FIELD
GET
GET$
LOC
LOF
LSET
MKI$, MKS$,
MKD$
OPEN COM
PUT
PUT$
RSET
SEEK
STRPTR
STRSEG
SUB, END
SUB
TONE

Here are the additional functions and statements that are included with PBASIC.

ACOS
ALARM
ASIN
BLOAD
BOX
BSAVE
CHAIN
CLICK
CMODE
COSH
CWD$
DECR
DEG
DIAL
DISPLAY
DMS
DOSVER
ERRWIN
EVAL
FALSE
FINDFILE$
FINDNEXT$
FILESIZE
FIX
FORMFEED
GETDISPLAY
GLOCATE
GPRINT
INCR
INVERT
LTRIM$
MENU
MSD
NUMFMT
OFF
PBVER
PGLOAD
PGSAVE
PGSHOW
PI
PORT
PRINTER
PRTSC
RAD
RAND
REFRESH
REPEAT/
UNTIL
ROMVER
RTRIM$
RUN
SINH
SHIFT
SOUND
SPACE$
STATUS
STOP
SWAP
SYSTEM
TANH
TICK
TIMER
TRUE
VCSRLIN
VLOCATE
VMOVE
VPOS
WAIT
WKSREAD
WKSREAD$
WKSTYPE
WRITE

As you can see from the above lists, PBASIC has many more functions and features than PowerBASIC, but PowerBASIC does have a few features that are missing in PBASIC. The choice is up to you.

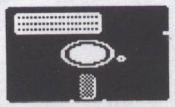
Program Update

The version of MACRO.HOO provided in the last issue had a minor bug in it: Sometimes, the first time you would use the program after rebooting the Portfolio, it would drop off the first character of the first macro. The new version of MACRO.HOO on this issue's diskette clears up this problem (if you received the first issue of the newsletter during October, you probably already have this new version, but copy it onto your disk just in case).

The new version also decreases its memory requirements and adds support for the MACRO.TXT file being moved to other drives. Like SplChk, if you put a file called MACRO.LOC on your A: drive with the full pathname of the MACRO.TXT file on it, you will be able to move the file anywhere you want in order to make it larger than what may fit on your RAM card.

The improved memory requirements allow MACRO.HOO to run on C: drives set as high as 24K.

Re:*Port* welcomes your comments about programs and possible bugs. We've happy to give free, fast support to our readers whenever you have a problem with any program or tip in Re:*Port*.



ON DISK

The new Macro program is on your Re:*Port* Disk #2 under the \MACRO directory.

Contest

Put a 2400-baud modem in your pocket

We've got something very special to give away this time — a 2400 baud pocket modem from Practical Peripherals! And, to sweeten the pot even more, the contest winner will get a gift certificate for $50 worth of free time on CompuServe! So you can get connected, for free.

The modem is about the size of a deck of cards and is powered by the Portfolio's serial port (note that you will need the serial port unit in order to attach the modem). It includes all the cables and adapters you will need to get going and uses the standard Hayes command set. And the first call you make should be to CompuServe, so you can start using your free time. Make sure you stop by the APORTFOLIO forum and say hello!

This time, we'll make it simple. Just copy and fill in the provided form and send it to:

Re:*Port* newsletter
c/o David E. Stewart, editor
1618 South Beech Court
Broken Arrow, OK 74012
ATTN: Modem contest

The winner will be selected at random from all entries and will be announced in the January 1 issue of Re:*Port*. Good luck! Contest deadline is December 18.

Re:*Port* Contest #2

Name: _____
What I'd like to see more of in Re:*Port*: _____
What I wouldn't mind seeing less of: _____
Type of program I'd like to see in a future issue: ___
_____
_____
Other comments: _____
_____
_____

Hiding Port files wins reader 128K card

One of the functions I use my port for is to keep a journal. I have devised a system to keep this file from being seen by others. A modified version of this technique could keep a confidential spread sheet, diary/calendar, or address/database.

You will need two small programs: KEY-FAKE.EXE and ATTR.COM (available in the public domain), and two batch files.

Let's call the first batch file "BRINGUP.BAT". It "unhides" the private file, calls it up from the port editor, sets the editor to 37 column word wrap, and moves the cursor to the end of the file.

We can call the second batch file "HIDEAWAY.BAT". It is used after you are done with your entry session. It hides the private file and calls in a "decoy" file, so that when the editor is next started it doesn't automatically bring up the secret file. The "DECOY" file must exist on your port, even if it's just an empty file. You could call it "NEW" and use the hideaway command to start new documents and "save as" some other name when you're done.

Like many Port owners, I keep most of my files on drive A:>. The ATTR.COM and KEY-FAKE.EXE programs are kept in a program directory that is in the search path in my AUTOEXEC.BAT. I have hidden the ATTR program with the command ATTR +H ATTR.COM. The batch files are hidden the same way.

I also use a batch file to move the private file from my PC card reader to a floppy disk on my PC, erase the file on the port, and replace an empty file in its place.

Here's BRINGUP.BAT to open your private file:

```
CLS
@ECHO OFF
ATTR -H A:\TEXT\PRIVATE.TXT
KEY-FAKE "APP" 13 "E" @59 "FL A:\TEXT\PRIVATE.TXT" 13
   @59 "W" @59  "R 38" 13 @118
```

Here's HIDEAWAY.BAT, used after saving:

```
CLS
@ECHO OFF
ATTR +H A:\TEXT\PRIVATE.TXT
KEY-FAKE "APP" 13 "E" @59 "FL A:\TEXT\DECOY.TXT" 13
```

If you are worried about someone knowing ATTR, you could rename ATTR.COM; then someone would have to know that secret name to try to unhide files on your Port.

— *Fred Greenspan*

Mailbox

Dear Re:*Port*:

Some DOS Tips. I presently use a bunch of small DOS programs. The most important program is ARCA, an ARC compressor. It gives me 1/3 more space on my 64K card. I compress my main address file. I made a small .BAT file that automatically uncompresses my address file and deletes the ARCed file. You have to delete the old ARCed file before you reARC. It will not write over the old one. I don't know why because I'm not a programmer.

I have also used Bank Street Writer. It worked OK. I could use the spell checker, which I needed badly, and the BOLD and ITL. The main problem was that the Port screen had to be on static. On the other hand, I use WP Executive. That wordprocessor worked great, but no spell checker.

I'm still looking for a dBASE compatible program that will work on the Port (editor's note: many online services now carry Don Messerli's program DBSHOW, which can display dBASE files on the Portfolio).

P.S. If you are ever in Tokyo and your Port breaks, go to Atari Japan in Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo. They will fix is quickly with no questions. Great service!

— Mike Barney, California

Dear Re:*Port*,

I hope you can help me out with the pinout of the Card drive connector on the left hand side of the Portfolio.

I have ordered both the software emulation package and hardware manual from DIP UK, but am still waiting. It took 2.5 months to get my first order from DIP and it is now 3 months since I ordered the software package. As I only ordered the Technical Reference manual about 3 weeks ago, I guess I still have a few months to wait. All of these orders have been by Air Mail both ways.

Why do I need the connector pinout so desperately? It's to build an EPROM and battery-backed SRAM adapter card for the Portfolio.

I hope to be able to produce a full kit of parts (chips not included) and retail it for around $20-$30. It should support 8K, 16K, 32K, 64K, & 128K EPROMs, and 8K, 32K, & 128K static rams. Battery backup will be possible by using a Dallas Semiconductor Smart Socket.

It should be possible to do all the artwork on a single sided board. This depends on the complexity of the birdsnest if the pinout is a horror and doesn't line up readily with the socket.

A blank plastic credit card will be used for height adjustment to the connector which will be glued to the lower side of the board. Another credit card will be glued to the top side of the board. This will protect the board top and bottom, and ensure electrical isolation when the card is inserted into the Portfolio. I have already made up a dummy board so that I could choose the correct dimensions and thickness of these two plastic cards. I am very happy with the results.

I am using a strip of 32 machine socket pins (snapped in half) as the chip carrier. Male pins and test links will allow the user to set the board up for the above chip types. RAM write protection will be provided. Four extra pads (now 36 pins) are used to pickup the unused address lines. I assume that these will be A17, A18, & A19. This will enable access to all signals from the Port connector. By soldering in the four additional pins, a 40 pin header can then be used for user expansion. I am lead to believe that this connector will address 1Mb.

The unit will not protrude very far outside the Portfolio. The total inserted height will be lower than the shut case of the Portfolio, even with a Smart Socket installed.

If I can get away with using a single sided board, (all components mounted on top) then I could use another small plastic card section to insulate the bottom of the works end of things.

I have completed the required software. All I need now is the pinout to see if the idea will work.

— Don McKenzie, Australia

Editor's Note: Because Atari has made the Technical Reference Guide confidential, Re:*Port* can't respond to Mr. McKenzie's question.

If we have any hardware hackers in the audience who are able to help Mr. McKenzie build his part, or who would like more information, write to him in care of Re:*Port* newsletter, 1618 South Beech Court, Broken Arrow, OK 74012